

## MATAWIRAH TRIBE

from the Masri family of Nablus. She developed an interest in film and photography during her high school years in Beirut, traveling to the United States to pursue her university education in 1977, where she received her bachelor's degree in film from San Francisco State University in 1981. Masri has directed and produced several award-winning films that provide a fine-grained view of women's and children's lives in situations marked by conflict, uncertainty, and crisis. Her films have been broadcast in the Arab world, Europe, the United Kingdom, and North America and have received ten international awards, including Best Documentary at the Institut du Monde Arabe Film Festival in Paris. She has also directed *Children of Fire* (1990) and *Children of Shatila* (1998), which won Best Director and Best Camera awards at the Arab Screen Festival in London.

During the later years of the Lebanese Civil War, Masri and her husband, Lebanese filmmaker and producer Jean Khalil Chamoun, filmed Lebanese and Palestinian civilians attempting to live and work under bombardments in Beirut and in South Lebanon, turning their copious footage of the war years into award-winning films such as *Under the Rubble* (1983), *Wild Flowers* (1987), *War Generation-Beirut* (1989), and *Suspended Dreams* (1992). All of these films show the costs of war and displacement, but also the strength of the human spirit and the importance of creative expression in the midst of large-scale destruction. In 1995 Masri directed a portrait of Hanan Ashrawi for BBC television, entitled *A Woman of Her Time*. She has also produced *Hostage of Time* (1994) and the feature film *In the Shadows of the City* (2000), which won the Cannes Junior Award. Masri currently lives in Beirut with her husband and their two daughters.

LAURIE KING-IRANI

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See TRIBES AND TRIBALISM: MATAWIRAH TRIBE

## MATRAH

*Port city of Oman.*

Originally a fishing village, after the sixteenth century Matrah became the hub of Oman's domestic

commerce and home of a cosmopolitan merchant community. Today the site of Oman's largest port, Matrah lies adjacent to Muscat, the sultanate's capital. It is essentially being absorbed into the burgeoning capital urban complex.

*See also* MUSCAT.

## Bibliography

Hawley, Sir Donald. *Oman and Its Renaissance*, 4th revised edition. London: Stacey International, 1987.

ROBERT G. LANDEN

## MATZPEN

*Israeli leftist, anti-Zionist group.*

Israel's most vilified anti-Zionist group from 1967 to 1972, Matzpen (Hebrew, "compass," also known as the Israeli Socialist Organization) was the first leftist organization to identify Jewish colonization and Palestinian dispossession as the basis of the Arab-Israel conflict. The group, formed by students in 1962, broke with the Communist Party over its acceptance of the Israeli state. Harassed and often hounded out of jobs, a number of members moved abroad, created a European support network, and established contacts with Palestinian leftists there.

Never more than a few dozen strong, Matzpen came to public attention for protesting Israel's occupation of the West Bank in 1967; this was viewed as treachery by those who saw the occupation as a defensive necessity. Most Matzpen members favored a binational state. In their first dialogues at Bir Zeit University, and in subsequent dialogues with the Palestine Liberation Organization and Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine representatives, they argued that Jews should enjoy national rights in a future Palestinian state, whereas their Palestinian interlocutors insisted that Jews should have simply cultural and religious rights.

Matzpen attracted further hostility in Israel in the early 1970s, when it encouraged Black Panther protests in Israel and supported Palestinian resistance in the Territories. Its members were accused of supporting foreign espionage, and in 1972 one of them, Ehud "Udi" Adiv, was arrested and later imprisoned, for contacting Syrian authorities. The group split over ideological affiliation in 1972